

What is claimed is:

1. A polishing apparatus for polishing a workpiece,
said polishing apparatus comprising:

5 a polishing table having a polishing surface;
 a top ring for holding the workpiece and pressing
the workpiece against said polishing surface;
 a dresser for dressing said polishing surface; and
 a sensor for observing a property of said polishing
10 surface on said polishing table when said polishing surface is
being dressed by said dresser.

2. A polishing apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said property of said polishing surface is
15 irregularity or undulation thereof.

3. A polishing apparatus according to claim 1,
further comprising a display device for displaying the
property of said polishing surface observed by said sensor.
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4. A polishing apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said sensor is mounted on one of said top ring and
said dresser and is vertically movable independently of said
top ring or said dresser.

25 5. A polishing apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said sensor measures a property of said polishing
surface over an area larger than an area which is dressed by

said dresser.

6. A polishing apparatus according to claim 1,
further comprising:

5 a determination device for comparing an initial
property of said polishing surface which is measured by said
sensor with a property of said polishing surface which is
measured by said sensor after said polishing surface is
dressed by said dresser, and determining when to replace a
10 component of said polishing surface based on the result of
comparison.

7. A method for polishing a workpiece, comprising:
 holding the workpiece and pressing the workpiece
15 against a polishing surface on a polishing table to polish the
workpiece;

 observing a property of said polishing surface on
said polishing table by a sensor when said polishing surface
is being dressed by a dresser;

20 comparing an initial property of said polishing
surface which is measured by said sensor with a property of
said polishing surface which is measured by said sensor after
said polishing surface is dressed by said dresser; and

 determining when to stop the dressing operation
25 based on the result of comparison.